



VERMONT SECRETARY OF STATE
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
2025

The Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) is a division of the Office of the Secretary of State. OPR's mission is to protect the public from incompetent or unethical practitioners through a system of licensure that assures a minimum barrier to entering a profession to practice competently and removes bad actors who have demonstrated unprofessional conduct.

OPR believes in good licensing policy which has impacted the regulatory landscape in Vermont over the last few years. Examples include temporary licenses, telehealth licenses, emergency licenses, compacts, and more....

OPR oversees 52 diverse professions, over 168 different license types, and over 80,000 licensees which include individuals, entities, and events. OPR has a staff of 42 staff which includes, licensing, enforcement, inspection, docket, administration, and legal.

OPR is a special fund agency that relies on fee revenue.



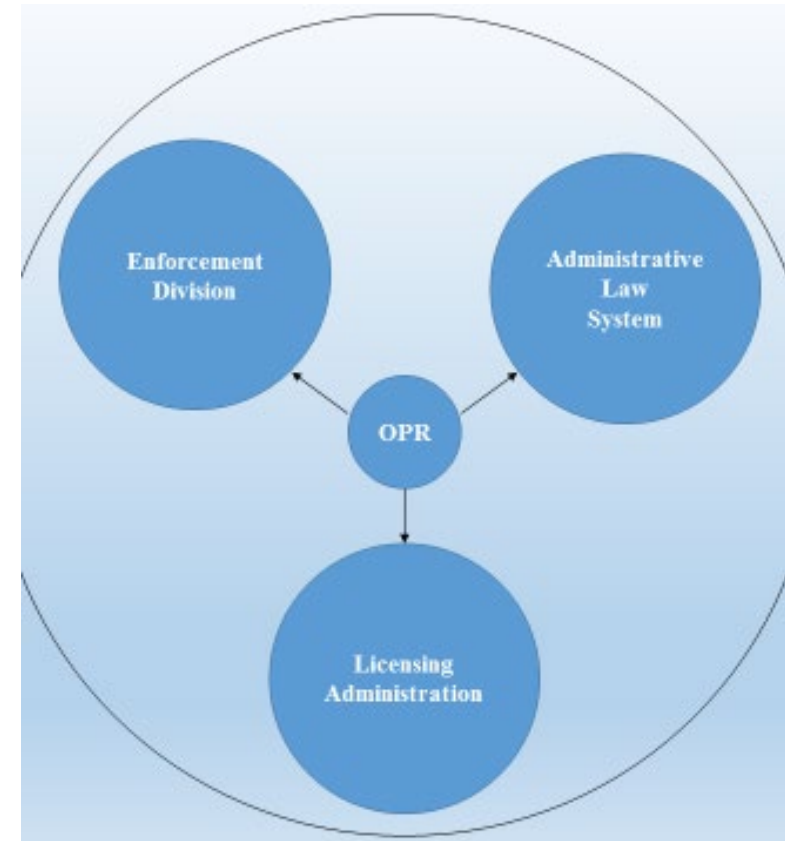
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OPR's Functions

OPR's core function is public protection.

- ❖ License Administration
 - ❖ OPR's licensing team is responsible for ensuring applicants have met the minimum standards as outlined in the Statutes and Rules to protect the public and practice competently.
- ❖ Enforcement
 - ❖ OPR's enforcement team reviews complaints of unprofessional conduct and removes bad actors from the marketplace or conditions, reprimands or warns licensees to put the public on notice of findings of conduct.
- ❖ Quasi Judicial Court System
 - ❖ This is done through OPR's Administrative Law System.



OPR provides essential public services for Vermonters

OPR is responsible for regulating the conduct and safe practice of approximately 84,000 licensed professionals.

Additionally, OPR is also responsible for the conduct of another 10,000-20,000 non-resident professionals whose credentials allow the privilege of short-term, interstate practice.

The Office's regulatory efforts have significant implications on commerce, healthcare, law enforcement, and consumer protection.

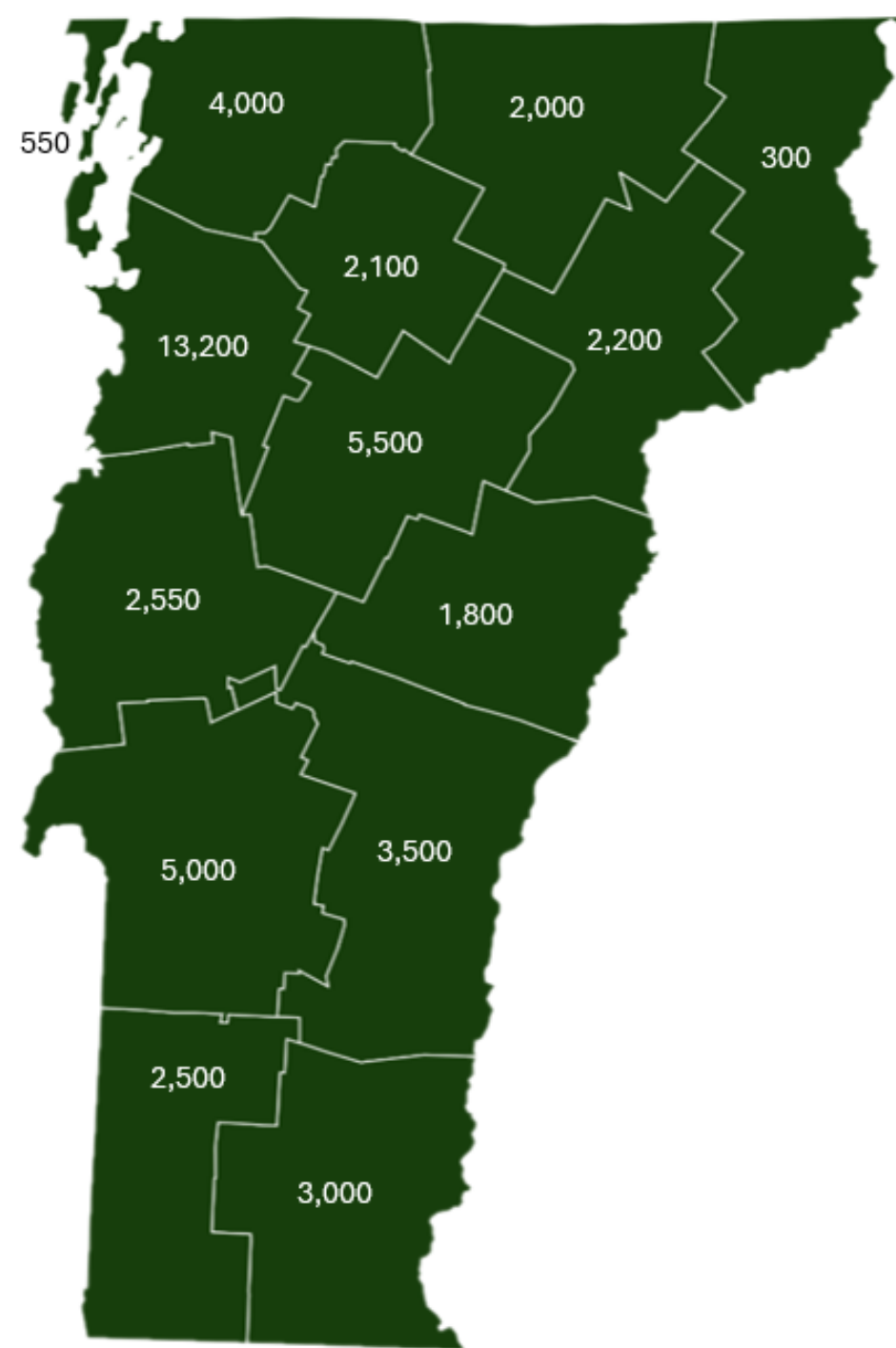


Figure 1: A map of OPR's approximately 50,000 Vermont-resident professionals, by county.

Governance Models

Of OPR's 52 professions, 14 are governed by the board model and 37 are governed by the advisor model.

Board and Advisor Models

Advisors

- Appointed by the Secretary of State
- Licensing fees pooled and standardized
- Required Director consultation and public meetings
- Disciplinary hearings go to an Administrative Law Officer (ALO)

Boards

- Historically regulated professions (generally)
- Appointed by the Governor
- Licensing fees siloed and not standardized
- Decide on disciplinary cases

Establishing & Modifying Professional Regulation

26 V.S.A. Chapter 57 provides the authority and framework for modifying and adding new professions to OPR.

When individuals or groups request that a profession be regulated it triggers a sunrise review.

- ❖ a comprehensive assessment to determine whether or not OPR makes recommendations to the Vermont Legislature that the profession should be regulated.
- ❖ OPR will recommend a profession be regulated if it determines that
 - ❖ Government intervention is in the public's best interest or
 - ❖ if it finds that the public's health, safety, and welfare are harmed or at risk without some form of regulation.

This assessment is necessary to ensure OPR impacts access to the marketplace where there is demonstrated harm by not doing so.

Title 26

Chapter 57: Review of Regulatory Laws

§3101

(a) It is the policy of the State of Vermont that regulation be imposed upon a profession or occupation solely for the purpose of protecting the public. The General Assembly believes that all individuals should be permitted to enter into a profession or occupation unless there is a demonstrated need for the State to protect the interests of the public by restricting entry into the profession or occupation.

(b) If such a need is identified, the form of regulation adopted by the State shall be the least restrictive form of regulation necessary to protect the public interest. If regulation is imposed, the profession or occupation may be subject to review by the Office of Professional Regulation and the General Assembly to ensure the continuing need for and appropriateness of such regulation.



OPR Governing Statutes

OPR is governed by Title 3 and Title 26

Title 3 governs all professions regulation by OPR.

- Duties of the Office
- Fees
- Unprofessional Conduct
- Unauthorized practice (all professions)
- Power of Boards and appointments
- Renewals

Title 26 are profession-specific chapters.

- General Provisions
- Board/Advisor Composition
- Licenses
- Unprofessional Conduct (profession specific)



OPR's Online Licensing System known as NGLP is our sole IT platform and work management system.

NGLP allows OPR to streamline work and workflows to accommodate our complex needs for licensing, enforcement, docket, and inspections.

The agility of NGLP allowed OPR to continuously pivot during the COVID pandemic offering many new license types to Vermonters out-of-state professionals.

New developments include the configurator which allows OPR staff to build our applications and change existing applications without a developer.

Legislative Goals for 2025- OPR Bill

The theme of the 2025 OPR bill is creating a better balance between access and financial sustainability.

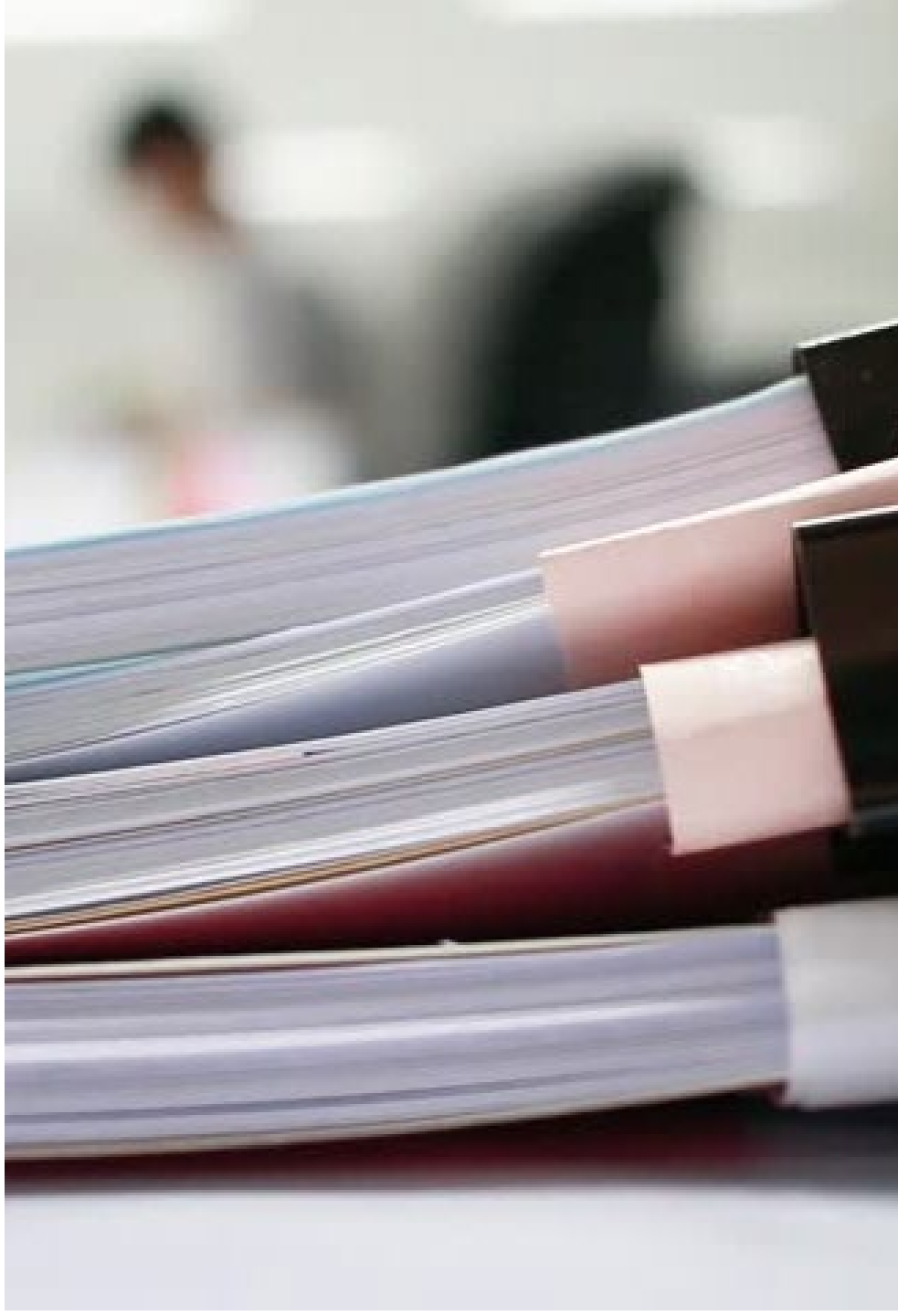
In this session, OPR proposes assessing fees for services that have previously been at no cost and raising fees for services that have been low cost.

OPR plans to open the Funeral chapter to strike sections related to OPR appointing Escrow Agents (§1272 and §1275).



Other Bills Related to OPR (That we know about)

- A bill related to the regulation of Community Doulas
- A bill related to the regulation of Early Childhood Educators
- A bill related to expansion of the scope of practice for optometry
- New licensure compacts for dental and dietitians
- Psychology prescribing
- A bill related to the regulation of septic installers & inspectors

A vertical image on the left side of the slide shows a stack of several books with different colored covers (blue, red, white). The background is blurred, showing a person in a white shirt and dark pants. The text on the right is in a large, black, sans-serif font.

Reports OPR submitted or is about to submit to the Legislature

- Real Estate Regulatory Review
- OPR Money Study Report
- Early Childhood Educator Sunrise
- Doulas Sunrise
- MVR Sunset Report
- Contractor Status Report
- Mental Health Licensure Study

THANK YOU

We look forward to working with you this session.

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